

# Workable Presentations



## 20 Tips (more or less) to a Successful Presentation

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# Tips on Background Choice



- **White is boring.**
  - **Clutter is confusing.**
  - **Stay away from “cute”, which is more likely to backfire than to appeal.**
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# Text Choice



- Choose your font for clarity and readability.
  - Make an impression, don't generate confusion.
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# Text Choice


☞ Lots of serifs (swirls & curls) are ok on a small screen, but a little goes a long way.

☞ This *may* be ok.

☞ This might be pretty, could be stylish - may be impossible to read.

# Talk about what's on the slide.



- If you're not going to talk about it, don't use it.
  - Exception: if you think a particular question is likely, add a slide to your file and place it after your closing so it's there if you need it.
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# How many slides is enough?

- The extremes are easy to set - no more than 1 or 2/minute.
- At least 1 every 5 minutes (unless they contain animation).

# How many points can you (should you) make on a slide?

- ☛ A lot less than 10. Probably less than 5.
- ☛ Somewhere between 1 and 3, but it depends on the complexity of the points.

# Color

Remember that about 5% of your audience will be colorblind.

To them, these words

Red

Green

May look the same.



# Color, continued

- ✓ Run through your talk in black and white if you can.
- ✓ Can you still read things?
- ✓ Is the impact what you want it to be?  
(remember most presentation programs print handouts in b/w, so this tactic would preview both the talk and the hard copy)

# Contrast

- ✓ Contrast is the difference between the darkness and paleness of the colors.
- ✓ **Black and white** are the highest contrast and usually easy to read. But the background on this slide is gray, so any text in **white** could disappear.

# Microphones

- ✔ Can be too soft. Can be too loud.
- ✔ Do you need one at all?
- ✔ Today's mikes can pick up noises from all over the room - it doesn't need to be 2'' from your mouth for it to be heard.
- ✔ Speak slowly and clearly.

# Presentation

- ✓ **Have your presentation reviewed by some one else.**
  - **After spending several hours on a presentation some obvious errors may not be seen. A new reader more likely to see them.**
- ✓ **Spell check your presentation.**

**And then do it again.**

**Backwards** (reading the slides from #20 to #1).



# Presentation

## ✓ Start your presentation strong.

- People have come to hear you. Do not be shy. Speak loud and clear.

## ✓ Do not rush through your presentation

- Practice your presentation several times if you have to until you can deliver it in the allotted time without rushing it.

## ✓ Show enthusiasm.




# Size of Images



**When in doubt, make the images and text too large.**

**As a rule of thumb, if you can't read them easily when 5 feet from your computer screen, they're too small.**



# Plan for Disaster

- ☛ Take a hard copy of your talk with you.
- ☛ Or bring a CD or jump drive backup of your talk that you could run from another computer.
- ☛ Or, if you're really a pessimist, produce your PowerPoint presentation on overheads.


# Talk to Your Audience

☛ Don't talk to your slides. They don't care what you have to say. They should summarize your talk, not BE your talk.

☛ Turn your back on the screen once you're sure the right slide is up and talk to the people who came to listen.

# Humor



- Frequently a good thing.
  - More often a recipe for disaster.
  - If you're not sure of your audience, play it straight.
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# Your Message is Special, NOT “special effects”

Flashing lights and moving text are nice,

But

if people remember you used flashing  
lights but NOT what you said, you have  
failed to deliver your message.



# **Tell people when you're done.**



**✓ Put in a slide that says “The End”  
or “C’est Fini” or “Thank You”.**

**✓ (How else will they know when to applaud?)**





**Thank you.**